

August 16, 2005

Re: Request for Proposal (RFP) No. R0502659 Telecommunications Relay Services for the State of Delaware.

Dear Supplier,

You are invited to submit a proposal to provide Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) for the State of Delaware. TRS allows a person with a hearing and/or speech disability, utilizing a Text Telephone (TTY) to communicate with a hearing person using a telephone through the assistance of a Communications Assistant (CA).

This service was established pursuant to orders approved by the Delaware Public Service Commission consistent with its responsibility under the Delaware Public Utility Code. In 1989, the Governor approved legislation passed by the Delaware General Assembly requiring the establishment of a dual party relay service, now known as TRS, to provide the individuals with hearing and speech disabilities with access to the telecommunications network in Delaware. The General Assembly specified that telecommunications relay service should be provided by a public utility providing local exchange telephone service. The General Assembly allowed Verizon to enter into contractual agreements as needed, with other entities to perform all or any part of the service.

Suppliers wishing to submit proposals for the work covered by this RFP must be able to provide all of the services as listed in **Appendix A, DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES**.

Terms and Conditions: Included in this package is **Appendix B, SERVICES AGREEMENT**, a sample copy of the type of contractual terms and conditions that would apply to any agreement between our companies should we elect to enter into such an agreement with your company as a result of this RFP. **Any comments or exceptions to the terms and conditions attached should be clearly defined and affixed as Attachment 1. It should be noted that exceptions to our terms and conditions, may result in the rejection of your proposal.**

Verizon will accept proposals to contractually provide this service, as it is described herein, for a term of three (3) years, commencing on or about January 1, 2006 at 12:00 midnight. The successful bidder must be able to meet the requirements of the RFP for the full term of the contract.

Due Date and Time of RFP

To receive consideration, responses to the RFP must arrive by 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, on September 14, 2005.

Certificate of Insurance: In order for your proposal to be considered, you must return a properly completed insurance Standard Accord form **with your proposal**. This form should be affixed as Attachment 2.

Please use Appendix C, Price Schedule, to list prices associated with this service. If there are additional pricing factors to be considered, they should be attached to Appendix C, and submitted with your quote.

Proposals should be submitted on the basis that prices would be firm for the first three years of the contract, unless a lower price becomes available. Price increases would be subject to the terms stated in the Terms and Conditions attached.

Please be advised that it is Verizon's desire to award a contract that may result from this RFP to a "full-service" provider. Therefore whatever proposals may be received will be compared and analyzed on the basis of the company that offers to supply the widest range of support services, in addition to the best overall pricing and quality of service.

ADDITIONAL PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS (Your Proposal Must Also Address The Following Areas:

1. Minority Women Owned Disadvantaged Veterans Business Enterprise (MWDVBE) Program: It is one of Verizon's corporate policies to take affirmative action to provide maximum practical opportunity for Minority and/or Women owned businesses to participate in Verizon procurement opportunities. Pursuant to this policy, please indicate whether or not any sub-contracting opportunities will result from the work covered by this agreement. If sub-contracting opportunities will exist, please indicate what those opportunities will be, and what percentage of that work will be provided by MWDVBE suppliers. This would include work that will be performed by handicapped persons as well as sheltered workshops. **This information should be supplied as Attachment 3, and titled Verizon Sub-Contracting Plan.** You will be required to report this information to Verizon on a quarterly basis.

2. Quality Improvement Process: Verizon has adopted as one of our corporate values a commitment to a Quality Improvement Process (QIP). This commitment is to put Quality first in everything we do, and to work for continual improvement until we always do everything right the first time. We also require our suppliers to demonstrate an understanding and commitment to QIP. **Pursuant to this, please provide whatever information**

you may have available regarding your company's commitment to the **Quality Improvement Process as Attachment 4**. If possible, this documentation should include a Quality Statement, and a description of your Quality activities and results.

3. Prompt Payment Discount: Please address in your proposal what, if any, cash discount your company would extend to Verizon for payments made in less than thirty (30) days. **(See Appendix C, Price Schedule)**

4. Contract Implementation Action Plan: Because of the nature of the service covered by this contract, it is imperative to Verizon that any transitioning that is required, as a result of this contract, be done in a manner that is transparent to the customers that use this service. Therefore, all companies submitting a quote for the work covered by this contract must submit a proposed, comprehensive "Implementation Action Plan", with a complete time-line, which is acceptable to Verizon, that describes how they would propose to transition this program in a manner that would cause little or no service interruption or inconvenience to the customers for whom this service is intended. **This action plan should be supplied as Attachment 5.**

5. Reporting: Verizon will require monthly reports detailing numerous service quality and statistical measures, such as average speed of answer, blockage rate, number of VCO and HCO calls relayed, number of Voice and TTY calls relayed, number of sequence Voice and TTY calls relayed, number of Speech to Speech calls relayed, etc. Additionally, the provider will be required to submit to Verizon monthly reports summarizing customer contacts and complaints and the status of the complaint as well as Outreach, advertising and promotional activities performed during the previous month. **Samples of these reports should be affixed as Attachment 6.**

6. Minimum Standards: The minimum standards described in this quote are required of all providers. Bidders should base their quotes on the costs necessary to meet these minimum standards. Verizon-Del acknowledges that certain other service features may be offered by providers, but any features or functions above and beyond these minimum standards are to be provided at the vendor's expense. However, Verizon-Del encourages vendors to develop means for providing any service enhancements that could be valuable to users. Nothing in the Master Agreement shall prevent providers from offering service features to users that are not included in these minimum standards and charging users directly for the features, consistent with the FCC's requirements on charges for TRS services.

7. Use of Existing TRS 800 Numbers: Verizon plans to retain the current voice and TTY 800 numbers used to reach TRS. The winning bidder will be awarded the use of the existing 800 numbers and, if necessary, use those numbers to route TRS calls to the bidder's new or existing TRS center(s). Access shall also be provided via "711" which shall point to the 800-509-2245 number.

8. Alternative Proposals: In addition to the requirements set forth in this RFP, Verizon will accept alternate proposals that will enhance the service provided or that may offer additional efficiencies and/or may be more cost effective than the specified proposal guidelines, on a noncommittal basis. These proposals will be considered during the evaluation phase of this project. Any such information which you may choose to make available to us will be received on the basis that it is non-confidential and that we may use such information for any and all purposes. **Alternative proposals should be described and included as Attachment 7.**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION TO CONSIDER FOR PRICING:

Call Volumes

Average monthly call volumes for TRS since 2002, as the chart illustrates:

2002	12,275
2003	12,624
2004	11,208
2005(Jan.-May)	10,166

Total monthly billable minutes recorded and invoiced to Verizon for the most recent twelve month period are as follows:

2004	
June	45,965.62
July	46,385.16
August	45,445.34
September	45,683.02
October	46,099.54
November	43,125.65
December	44,707.84
<u>2005</u>	
January	45,704.01
February	42,451.10
March	42,206.60
April	38,693.76
May	42,141.26

Call Length

The average length of calls into TRS for 2004 and 2005 has been 4 to 5 minutes of actual talk time.

SUBMISSION OF QUOTES

1. **Preparation:** Quotes are to be prepared in such a way as to provide a straightforward, concise delineation of capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP. EMPHASIS SHOULD BE CONCENTRATED ON CONFORMANCE TO THE RFP INSTRUCTIONS, RESPONSIVENESS TO THE RFP REQUIREMENTS AND ON COMPLETENESS AND CLARITY OF CONTENT.

2. **Bidder's Cost:** Costs for developing quotes and bids are the responsibility entirely of the bidder and shall not be chargeable to Verizon.

3. **False or Misleading Statements:** Bids that contain false misleading statements, or which provide references which do not support an attribute or condition claimed by the bidder, may be rejected.

4. **Delivery of Quotes: Bidders are solely responsible for ensuring that their bid is received at the date and time required.**

5. **Customer References/Experiences in Providing Relay or Similar Services:** Bidders must provide a list of at least three (3) of their customers who have purchased TRS services or telecommunication services similar in nature, size and scope to the required TRS described in this RFP. The customers used for reference purposes must be external to the bidder's organization and its corporate organization. Include company name, contact name, title, address and telephone number of one person for each reference. Customer references will be contacted, and the bidder's past performance will be evaluated to assess the bidder's ability to successfully perform on this project. **References should be included as Attachment 8.**

Prospective service providers should include a report specifying any relevant services currently being provided by the prospective service provider (for example, all locations of existing and planned relay systems) , and any other information that would assist in evaluating prospective service providers prior experience in providing relay or similar services.

7. **Vendor Responsibility, Qualifications and Experience:** Prior to entering into a Contract with the provider, Verizon must be assured that the provider has the commitment and resources necessary to successfully perform under the Contract. This includes but is not limited to: personnel available for this project in the numbers and with the skills required, equipment and networks for the appropriate type and in sufficient quantity, financial resources sufficient to provide the services required and experience in similar endeavors. Bidding firms must show that they have been in business for a minimum of three years, successfully providing substantially equivalent services.

a. Subcontractors and Suppliers

The provider who enters into the Contract will be responsible for coordinating and controlling all aspects of implementation, including support to be provided by any subcontractor and/or supplier. The provider shall be the sole point of contact with Verizon relative to contract performance. The provider will be fully responsible for the completion of any work subcontracted.

8. Employment of People with Disabilities: TRS service is designed to improve communications with and for people with hearing and/or speech disabilities. In recognition of the special and strong contribution people with disabilities can make to TRS, it is anticipated that the provider will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will employ people with disabilities to the greatest extent possible.

Verizon reserves the right to request clarification on items of supplier responses, or to request additional information, and may invite suppliers to give formal presentations on their service during the evaluation process. Suppliers should be prepared to demonstrate that their capabilities can be provided as stated in their responses.

NO SPECIFICATIONS, DRAWINGS, SKETCHES, MODELS, SAMPLES, TOOLS, COMPUTER OR OTHER APPARATUS, PROGRAMS, TECHNICAL OR BUSINESS INFORMATION OR DATA, WRITTEN, ORAL OR OTHERWISE, FURNISHED BY ANY PERSPECTIVE SERVICE PROVIDER IN CONNECTION WITH ITS RESPONSE TO THE RFP OR IN CONTEMPLATION OF A SERVICE AGREEMENT SHALL BE CONSIDERED BY A PROSPECTIVE SERVICE PROVIDER TO BE, OR TREATED BY VERIZON AS, CONFIDENTIAL OR PROPRIETARY.

You are not to discuss the contents of your proposal with any other Verizon personnel. This stipulation is intended to merely maintain the confidentiality and objective integrity of the proposal process, and not to impede or inhibit your marketing or sales activities.

This is a request for proposal and is in no way to be misconstrued as a commitment to purchase on the part of Verizon. Please keep in mind that Verizon reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals and will not be bound to accept the lowest price. Verizon will consider all factors bearing upon the prospective service provider's proposal. All proposals and other material submitted become the exclusive property of Verizon. Bidders will be notified in writing of the award or non-acceptance after a decision is made, and the purchase authorized.

Maryellen Bruno
Verizon Sourcing Process Leader

APPENDIX A

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

In addition to the terms and conditions set forth in this Agreement, the following shall apply:

1.0 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1.1 Public Service Commission Rules and Regulations

Seller must conform to all relevant orders of the Delaware Public Service Commission and provisions of the Delaware Public Utility Code, 26 Del Code Section 101 *et seq.* The rules and regulations covered by these documents were approved by the Delaware Public Service Commission by Order No. 3132 on February 13, 1990.

1.2 Telecommunications Act

Seller agrees to comply with the terms and conditions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, as they may relate to providing telecommunications relay service.

1.3 Non-Solicitation

Seller agrees not to use TRS in any way for business solicitation purposes. This would include, but would not be limited to the sale of any type of telecommunications services, either local or long distance, or any other services or products that the Seller may offer.

1.4 Compensation

Buyer shall compensate Seller for the services covered in this Agreement, on a per-minute basis for all intrastate calls made through Delaware TRS. Buyer will reimburse Seller for providing TRS on a total minute of service basis. All minutes of use involved in a TRS call, including call set-up, call duration and call wrap-up, tracking, and reporting are to be incorporated into the per-minute rate. Seller shall not invoice Buyer for call minutes associated with interstate or international calls.

1.5 Committee Participation

Seller agrees to appoint a company representative to serve on the Delaware Telecommunications Relay Advisory Committee. Seller further agrees to ensure that the representative makes every effort to participate in the committee's quarterly meetings, which are open to the public. Participation

on this committee is an essential element in ensuring that the needs of the customers are being met, and that suggestions for improving the service are being heard by the Seller.

1.6 Billing Records

The telecommunications relay center shall create for each relay-assisted call an Extended Message Record (EMR) as described in Bellcore Practice BR 010-200-010, CRIS Exchange Message Record or an Extended Message Interface (EMI) record as described in Bellcore Publication SRISD 000320. The record shall contain, at a minimum, the following information:

- a) Telephone number or credit card number to be billed NPA-Prefix-Line Number
- b) Terminating Telephone Number - NPA-Prefix-Line Number
- c) Originating Telephone Number - NPA-Prefix-Line Number
- d) Date
- e) Start Time
- f) End Time
- g) Call Type
- h) Preferred Interexchange Carrier (PIC) for interLATA calls.

The billing record should be in sufficient detail to allow the call to be billed from the calling party's originating telephone number to the called party's terminating telephone number. Seller shall forward the EMR/EMI for each call to the Buyer or the appropriate interexchange carrier as applicable or the location designated by the appropriate carrier, within fourteen days of the date such service was supplied.

1.7 Tariffed Rates

Relay calls, both local and toll (intraLATA and interLATA), shall be billed to the party calling the Telecommunications Relay Service at the same rate that would apply if the relay center were not involved in completing the call. Such relay calls shall be billed at Buyer's applicable Guide rate or, for interLATA calls, the carrier's applicable tariff rate. The user shall be given their choice of interexchange carriers at that carrier's rates and using that carrier's calling card or phone debit card.

As noted in the Public Service Commission's Regulation Docket No. 24, dated February 8, 1990, page 2 of 9, the Commission's rules and regulations require that interstate calls originating and billed within the State of Delaware shall be completed by the Relay Center. However, item 2.c provides that the prospective service provider shall complete calls placed across state lines, even if originated outside Delaware, if the call is considered a local call as noted in the appropriate pages of P.S.C. Del. - No. 3A, Paragraph C.2; P.S.C. Md. - No. 202, Paragraph B.4; PA. P.U.C. - No. 180A, Paragraph D and PA. P.U.C. No. 182A, Paragraph D.2.

1.8 Transmission of IntraLATA Calls

Buyer, or its duly authorized affiliated companies, will transmit all Telecommunication Relay Service calls within the State of Delaware or within the Philadelphia Local Access and Transport Area ("LATA"), in accordance with the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

1.9 Invoices

The Seller is required to submit monthly invoices to the Buyer detailing the number of calls and minutes relayed by the provider for the previous month for Intrastate/IntraLATA calls originating in Delaware. Buyer will approve payment to providers on a monthly basis, based on these invoices, at the agreed upon rate for the minimum required service.

Invoices shall be emailed to:
cristy.toney@verizon.com

1.10 Reports

The Seller will submit monthly reports to the Buyer detailing numerous service quality and statistical measures, such as average speed of answer, blockage rate, number of VCO and HCO calls relayed, number of Voice and TTY calls relayed, number of sequence Voice and TTY calls relayed, number of Speech to Speech calls relayed, etc. Additionally, the provider will be required to submit to Buyer monthly reports summarizing customer contacts and complaints and the status of the complaint as well as Outreach, advertising and promotional activities performed during the previous month

Reports shall be emailed to:
eloise.m.murphy@verizon.com

2.0 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Overview

This section lists and describes the specific technical, operational and functional standards that fall within the scope of telecommunications relay service. Standards in these categories are all listed as "minimum" standards. Seller provides each minimum standard within its proposed TRS. No deviation from or waiver of these minimum standards will be allowed. Seller's price must include all costs to provide these minimum standards.

2.2 Technical Standards

a. Service Description

TRS enables a person who is deaf or hearing or speech disabled to communicate with a hearing person, and vice versa, using a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), a teletypewriter (TTY) or a personal computer with the assistance of a Communications Assistant at the Relay Service Center. STS enables a speech-disabled person to use the relay service with his/her own voice or voice synthesizer, rather than using a TTY. With STS, specially trained CAs function as human translators for speech-disabled persons who have trouble being understood on the telephone.

b. Hours of Operation

TRS shall operate 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

c. ASCII and Baudot

Seller must furnish all necessary telecommunications equipment and software to be capable of communicating with ASCII or Baudot format at any speed generally in use. Seller must be capable of identifying incoming TTY signals as being either ASCII or Baudot.

d. Transmission Quality

The transmission circuits shall meet or exceed FCC and PSC intraexchange performance standards for circuit loss and noise.

e. Usage

No restrictions shall be placed on the length or number of calls by users. Peak periods shall exist when blockage rate and average answer time exceed the specifications.

f. Access Numbers

The provider will maintain the existing two distinct 800 numbers for access to TRS: 1) a voice access number and 2) a TTY/Baudot access number. Additionally, TRS will be accessible in Delaware by calling 711. In its discretion, the provider may also make other 800 numbers available for specialty calling features.

g. Speed of Answer

1. The Seller shall ensure adequate TRS facility staffing to provide callers with efficient access under projected calling

volumes, so that the probability of a busy response due to CA unavailability shall be functionally equivalent to what a voice caller would experience in attempting to reach a party through the voice telephone network.

2. The Seller's facilities shall, except during network failure, answer 85% of all calls within 10 seconds by any method which results in the caller's call immediately being placed, not put in a queue or on hold. The ten seconds begins at the time the call is delivered to the Seller's facility's network. The Seller's facility shall ensure that adequate network facilities shall be used in conjunction with TRS so that under projected calling volume the probability of a busy response due to loop trunk congestion shall be functionality equivalent to what a voice caller would experience in attempting to reach a party through the voice telephone network.
 - a. The call is considered delivered when the TRS facility's equipment accepts the call from the local exchange carrier (LEC) and the public switched network actually delivers the call to the TRS facility.
 - b. Abandoned calls shall be included in the speed-of-answer calculation.
 - c. Compliance with this rule shall be measured on a daily basis.
 - d. The system shall be designed to a P.01 standard.

h. Blockage Rate

Average daily blockage rate for all calls into TRS shall be no greater than 1%. This shall be measured by sampling the number of calls being blocked at a minimum of every 30 minutes for each 24 hour period.

i. Real Time

TRS shall transmit conversation between voice and TTY callers in real time.

j. Use of Automatic Number Identification

TRS shall utilize Automatic Number Identification (ANI) technology so that no caller is required to give his/her originating calling number, except in instances where ANI information is not available from local exchange companies (LEC) or interexchange carriers (IXCs).

k. Next Available Assistant

Seller shall utilize dynamic call routing, or Next Available Assistant, techniques so that each call to TRS is routed to the first available TRS Communications Assistant within the provider's network.

l. Types of Calls

1. CAs are prohibited from refusing single or sequential calls or limiting the length of calls utilizing relay services.
2. The Seller is permitted to decline to complete a call because credit authorization is denied.
3. The Seller shall be capable of handling pay-per-call calls.
4. The Seller is required to provide the following types of TRS calls: (1) Text-to-voice/voice-to-text; (2) Voice carry-over (VCO), two-line VCO, VCO-to-TTY, and VCO-to-VCO; (3) HCO, two-line HCO, HCO-to-TTY, HCO-to-HCO.
5. The Seller is required to provide the following features: (1) Call release functionality; (2) speed dialing functionality; and (3) three-way calling functionality.
6. CAs must alert the TRS user of the presence of a recorded message and interactive menu through a hot key on the CA's terminal. The hot key will send text from the CA to the consumer's TTY indicating that a recording or interactive menu has been encountered. Relay providers shall electronically capture recorded messages and retain them for the length of the call. Relay providers may not impose any charges for additional calls, which must be made by the relay user in order to complete calls involving recorded or interactive messages.
7. The Seller shall provide, as TRS features, answering machine and voice mail retrieval.
8. The Seller shall provide interstate Spanish language relay service.
9. The Seller shall be capable of handling any type of call normally provided by telecommunications carriers unless the FCC determines that it is not technologically feasible to do so. The Seller has the burden of proving the infeasibility of handling any type of call.

m. Session Minute

The TRS calls will be billed on session minutes. Session minutes are defined as the time period a Communications Assistant (CA) connects to an incoming relay call until the moment the CA disconnects the last party.

n. Service Reliability

The provider's systems must be designed to meet the following reliability specifications:

1. Uninterruptible Power

The uninterruptible power system must support the switch system and its peripherals, switch room environmental, operator consoles/terminals, operator worksite emergency lights and call detail recording to ensure equipment reliability and service integrity.

2. Switching System

The switching system shall include a redundant CPU in reserve, as well as battery back-up and generator, to ensure that no calls are dropped due to processor failure. The system shall also include on-line system monitoring, real time programming capabilities which will not take the system off line, the ability to perform preventative maintenance without taking the system off line and an inventory of spare critical components which are maintained on site to ensure the required levels of service are met.

3. Intercept Messages

Intercept messages as appropriate shall be provided if a system failure occurs within the relay switch, the relay center or on inbound/outbound circuits. Voice, Baudot and ASCII messages shall be provided.

4. Disaster Recovery Plan

Seller shall develop a complete disaster recovery plan for dealing with all types of natural and manmade problems. The plan should detail the level of escalation that will be employed to deal with the problem and restore service. A primary requirement is to notify the Buyer's Coordinator if a major problem occurs. Any service outage, under the control of the Seller, exceeding four hours in length and within a twenty-four hour period, shall subject the TRS provider to a penalty equivalent to one day's (twenty-four hours) billing for the service for each such outage.

o. Access to Carrier of Choice

TRS users shall have access to their choice of interLATA (interstate and intrastate) and intraLATA carriers, as

appropriate, through the relay service to the same extent such access is provided to voice telephone users in Delaware. Seller shall describe the methods to be utilized to provide access to the caller's requested carrier. Seller shall also describe how other carriers will be informed of the process whereby other carriers may complete calls through TRS. Seller shall include information about accessing alternative carriers in appropriate outreach material.

These procedures must be included as Attachment 9, and submitted with the RFP for approval.

p. STS Called Numbers

The Seller must offer STS users the option to maintain at the relay center a list of names and telephone numbers which the STS user calls. When the STS user requests one of the names, the CA must repeat the name and state the telephone number to the STS user. This information must be transferred to any new STS provider.

q. Handling of Emergency Calls

The Seller must use a system for incoming emergency calls that, at a minimum, automatically and immediately transfers the caller to an appropriate Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP). An appropriate PSAP is either a PSAP that the caller would have reached if he had dialed 911 directly, or a PSAP that is capable of enabling the dispatch of emergency services to the caller in an expeditious manner.

Emergency Call procedures must be included as Attachment 10, and submitted with the RFP for approval.

r. Access to Directory Assistance

The Seller must provide callers with access to local and long distance directory assistance. Local directory assistance calls must be billed to end users at the same rate that would be billed by the local company that serves the end user. Long distance calls must be billed at the provider's tariffed rate or at the tariffed rate of the carrier used on the long distance directory assistance call. TRS callers must be able to access directory assistance through the provider's established TRS 800 access number.

Access to Directory Assistance and Billing procedures shall be briefly described and included as Attachment 11, and submitted with the RFP for approval.

s. Voice Carryover (VCO) and Hearing Carryover (HCO)

Seller shall provide both voice and hearing carryover at the request of the user. Voice carryover allows a TTY user to speak directly to the voice user (non-TTY user) and receive the message typed back on the TTY. Hearing carryover allows a TTY-user to hear directly what the voice user is saying and type back his or her message on the TTY which will be voiced by the Communications Assistant.

The Seller's system shall enable VCO and HCO users to utilize both TTY modes: acoustic mode and direct connect mode. The provider's system shall allow VCO relay users to set up the call using voice communication without the TTY transmission that is normally required to set up the relay call.

The Seller's system shall enable the VCO or HCO user to transmit or receive the spoken portions of the call in private (the CA shall not be able to hear those portions of the call) when requested by the user.

t. Customer Preference Identification

The provider shall provide customer preference identification. When the customer calls into the Relay Center, they may ask for permanent identification as a TTY, Voice, VCO, HCO or ASCII user so they are automatically answered in that mode for phone systems compatible with this feature.

u. Regionally Restricted 800 Numbers

The Seller shall describe the method for reaching regionally restricted 800 numbers.

This procedure must be included as Attachment 12, and submitted with the RFP.

v. Communications Assistant Monitoring

Relay Center CA positions shall include a second headset adapter to allow the supervisor to monitor conversations. In addition,

the supervisor must have the capability for remote silent monitoring of both the standard phone and TTY at each CA station.

The Seller shall describe how this capability will be provided, include it as Attachment 13, and submit it with the RFP.

w. 900/976 Calls

The bidder shall describe the method of accessing 900 and 976 numbers. The provider shall describe the procedure that will be used to implement this service, including how calls from a line that has 900/976 blocking will be identified and handled.

The provider shall affix a detailed billing procedure for 900/976 calls as Attachment 14, and submit it with the RFP.

x. Caller ID

The Seller must provide a fully automated Caller ID feature to allow Caller ID subscribers to receive the calling parties Automatic Number Identification (ANI) and/or block unwanted calls.

y. Multi-User Relay Choice Profile

The Seller must provide Delaware households with more than one relay user will be able to create a different profile for each user. Relay users in a household will be able to access their individual customer Relay Choice Profile (RCP) options by using a personal identification number (PIN).

3.0 COMMUNICATION ASSISTANT STANDARDS

3.1 Minimum Communication Assistant Qualifications

a. Communication Assistants (“CA”) must be sufficiently trained to effectively meet the specialized communications needs of individuals with hearing and speech disabilities.

b. CAs must have competent skills in typing, grammar, spelling, interpretation of typewritten ASL, and familiarity with hearing and speech disability cultures, languages and etiquette. CAs must possess clear and articulate voice communications.

c. CAs must provide a typing speed of a minimum of 60 words per minute. Technological aids may be used to reach the required typing speed. CAs must be given oral-to-type speed tests.

Seller shall briefly describe how applicants will be tested on the above qualifications, include it as Attachment 15, and submit it with the RFP.

3.2 Communication Assistant Training

- a. Seller shall train CAs to effectively meet the specialized communications needs of relay users who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, late deafened and speech disabled. CA training shall include, but is not limited to, orientation to deaf culture, American Sign Language (ASL), ASL to standard English translation, needs of hard-of-hearing, late deafened and speech disabled users and knowledge of TTY equipment and etiquette. Training shall include both simulated and live on-line call handling.
- b. Ongoing training shall be provided to update CAs when necessary on software changes, revised call handling procedures and any other ongoing areas necessary for the CAs to effectively perform their responsibilities.
- c. Appropriate portions of in-service training for CAs shall be provided by experts from deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and speech disabled communities in the field of language interpreting, ASL, deaf culture and speech disability as appropriate. Preference shall be given to trainers who are representatives of the various groups.
- d. All staff providing service to TRS, including management, shall receive ongoing training in disability awareness, including functional and cultural issues within the deaf, hard-of-hearing, late deafened and speech disabled communities of TRS users, ethics and confidentiality.
- e. STS CAs will be provided training to effectively handle the specialized communications needs of STS users. The training shall include, but is not limited to, orientation to various types of speech disabilities and audio training with samples of speech recorded by individuals with speech disabilities. Training shall include both simulated and live on-line call handling.

Seller shall briefly describe how training in the areas described above will be provided to staff. Training description should be included as Attachment 16, and submitted with the RFP.

3.3 Procedures for Relaying Conversations

CAs must convey the full content, context and intent of the conversation they relay. Unless requested otherwise by a user, the CA shall relay all calls according to the following procedures:

- a. CAs shall translate TTY-ASL of TTY users into correct spoken English so that non-TTY users can understand the call and conversation occurs.
- b. CAs shall, to the best of their abilities, let the TTY user know the non-TTY user's tone of voice. For example, the CA can type in parentheses that a person is being rude, is yelling, is laughing or any background noise that the CA hears.
- c. CAs shall keep the user informed on the status of the call, such as dialing, ringing, busy, disconnected or on hold.
- d. The TTY user shall have the option of telling the CA what aspects of the call he/she will handle. For example, the TTY user may request to introduce Relay Service to the called party rather than have the CA do it.
- e. The CA shall type to the TTY user or verbalize to the non-TTY user exactly what is said when the call is first answered and at all times during the conversation, unless either party specifically requests otherwise.
- f. When the CA needs to explain relay to a hearing user, the CA shall also type "explaining relay" for the benefit of the TTY user or vice versa. The CA shall have the option to inform the called party that the caller is deaf or speech disabled unless the caller asks the CA not to do so.
- g. When speaking for the TTY user, the CA shall adopt a conversational tone of voice appropriate to the type of call being made.
- h. CAs shall indicate to the TTY user if another person (non-TTY user) comes on the line.
- i. If a change of CAs is necessary, both parties shall be informed. Notwithstanding, CAs must stay on TTY-based calls for a minimum of 10 minutes, and STS calls for a minimum of 15 minutes unless the CA suffers a personal emergency.
- j. When a line is busy, the CA shall permit unlimited redials to the busy number at the request of the caller.

k. All comments directed to either party by the CA shall be relayed. These comments shall be typed in parentheses, for example, “(Can you spell that name back to me?)”. All comments directed to the CA by either party shall also be relayed in the same manner.

l. If either party uses the third person, the CA shall relay in the third person.

m. To correct a typing error, CAs shall not backspace, but continue in a forward direction by typing “XXX”, the common TTY convention for error, and then typing the word correctly.

n. CAs shall verify spelling of proper nouns, numbers and addresses that are spoken. This shall be relayed as discussed in k. above.

o. If a TTY user initiating a call asks, he/she will be advised of the CA’s gender, and upon request, switched to a CA of the gender of the caller’s choice.

p. The CA will stay on the line until both parties have terminated the call. If necessary to process a complaint or compliment, the call will be transferred to a supervisor.

q. CAs shall not counsel, advise or interject personal opinions or additional information into any relay call. This also means the CAs shall not make any value judgments on the profanity, obscenity or legality of any messages. Additionally, CAs shall not hold personal conversations with anyone calling TRS.

r. Callers shall not be required to give their names or the name of the party they are calling. If names are given, this information shall not be recorded in any form without the permission and knowledge of the caller. It is understood that, for some calls, having the full name would help facilitate the call. The CA may ask for that information and explain how it may facilitate the call. The CA shall not, however, refuse to make a call if the caller does not wish to give names.

s. CAs will uniformly recognize an “s” typed by a TTY user at the beginning of a call to indicate that the user is speech disabled. This convention shall be explained in all appropriate outreach or informational material distributed the provider.

t. CAs will leave messages on answering machines or other voice processing systems if the voice to TTY call activates one while making a call. Procedures for leaving messages shall include the following steps:

1. The CA will inform the caller when an answering machine has been reached.
2. The CA will ask the caller if he/she wishes to leave a message.
3. The CA will leave the caller's message either by voice or by TTY.
4. The CA will confirm to the caller that the message has been left.

Bidders shall briefly describe how their CA's use of the above procedures will be insured.

3.4 Confidentiality and Conversation Content

a. Except as authorized by section 705 of the Communications Act, 47 U.S.C. 605, CAs are prohibited from disclosing the content of any relay conversation regardless of content, and with a limited exception for STS CAs, from keeping records of the content of any conversation beyond the duration of the call, even if to do so would be inconsistent with state or local law. STS CAs may retain information from a particular call in order to facilitate the completion of consecutive calls, at the request of the user. The caller may request the STS CA to retain such information, or the CA may ask the caller if he wants the CA to repeat the same information during subsequent calls. The CA may retain the information only for as long as it takes to complete the call.

b. CAs are prohibited from intentionally altering a relayed conversation and, to the extent that it is not inconsistent with federal, state or local law regarding use of the telephone company facilities for illegal purposes, must relay all conversation verbatim unless the relay user specifically requests summarization, or if the user requests interpretation of an ASL call. An STS CA may facilitate the call of an STS user with a speech disability so long as the CA does not interfere with the independence of the user, the user maintains control of the conversation, and the user does not object.

Seller shall briefly describe their plans for adhering to the above confidentiality and conversation content requirements, include it as Attachment 17, and submit it with the RFP.

3.5 Obscenity

CAs do not have to tolerate obscenity directed at them. The quote shall specify how the provider will handle these situations. It

is acceptable to
at the CA to a supervisor.

transfer callers using obscenities directed

3.6 Communication Assistant Counseling

Seller is required to outline a counseling and support program that will help CAs deal with the emotional aspects of relaying calls.

Because CAs are not allowed to talk about their calls with other CAs, friends or family, CAs need to have access to someone they can talk to and trust. They need to be able to talk about their emotions and learn ways to cope with their feelings. Those providing this staff support must have training in dealing with these situations. However, the CAs shall not give the support person the names of the callers involved. The counseling support system must follow the confidentiality provisions discussed above.

3.7 Communication Assistant Identification

Relay System CAs shall immediately identify themselves when answering a call by using the phrase, "DE Relay CA XXXX (F or M)" where XXXX indicates the number assigned to that CA and the letters F or M indicate the CA's gender. The provider shall establish this method to allow easy identification of the CA in the event a complaint is filed.

a. Billing Capabilities and Charges

1. TRS users shall pay rates no greater than the rates paid for functionally equivalent voice communication services with respect to such factors as the duration of the call, the time of day and the distance from the point of origination to the point of termination.
2. Relay calls in which the called and calling parties reside in the same local exchange shall be charged at Verizon-Del's applicable tariffed rate. Calls that would normally result in intraLATA or interLATA toll rates should be billed to the calling party at an effective rate no higher than the tariffed rates of Verizon-Del or the carrier who handles the call less any applicable discounts for individuals who are certified as hearing or speech disabled.
3. The provider must provide billing to end users for interstate (interLATA) calls.
4. The provider must provide billing to end users for charges for collect calls, person-to-person calls, calls to and from hotel rooms, calling card calls and calls charged to a third party.
5. The provider must capture billing information in a call detail record which shall contain, at a minimum, the following

information. The system capturing this information must be automated as completely as possible.

- a. Telephone number or credit card number to be billed
- b. Originating telephone number
- c. Terminating telephone number
- d. Date
- e. Start time (the time the calling party is actually connected to the called party is connected to the CA to an answering machine at the called party's number or to a recorded message or intercept for the called number)
- f. End time (the time when the CA disconnects the caller)
- g. Call time to the nearest full second (the time in between the connect time and the disconnect time)
- h. Any special billing information

6. Information for intrastate point-to-point calls shall be delivered to LEC or the interexchange carrier's Billing Agent within fourteen (14) days of the date such service was supplied.

4.0 Functional Standards

4.1 Complaint Resolution

- a. The provider must establish procedures for receiving and responding to complaints, inquiries and comments regarding TRS services. These procedures shall be explained in appropriate TRS outreach or informational material.
- b. The provider shall insure that any caller to TRS having a complaint will be able to reach a supervisor or administrator while still on line during a relay call.
- c. All complaints received by supervisors or in writing shall be documented, including their resolution, kept on file and forwarded to Verizon-Del monthly.

Bidders shall briefly describe their complaint resolution procedures, include it as Attachment 18, and submit it with the RFP.

4.2 User Assistance Hotline

The Seller must establish a separate toll-free number that users may access to receive information on how to place a TRS call, tips for improving the efficiency of relay calls, information on billing for calls

or information on features and functions offered by the provider. The separate toll-free number must be accessible to TTY users and non-TTY users.

4.3 Outreach and Education

The Seller shall at its sole discretion use a variety of media to emphasize the value of Telecommunications Relay Service to all people including individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, speech disabled and deaf-blind as well as hearing people. Verizon shall at its sole expense produce and distribute a brochure that describes Delaware Relay Service that explains its use and features available to customers. The Verizon brochure shall be presented to Seller in its final form, for review, prior to use.

Seller may at its sole discretion encourage the use of relay service through the following:

- Articles in print publications, newspaper, newsletters
- Advertisements in local publications and conference program books
- Participation in various community activities such as forums
- Partnering with and training community members and non-profit organizations that serve the needs of people who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing or speech disabled on the delivery of Delaware outreach activities.
- Managing and coordinating the implementation of outreach activities such as:
 - Exhibiting at local, state, regional and national events
 - Participating in advisory board meetings
 - Managing requests for sponsorship of various events
 - Continually keeping up-to-date on politics and trends in the relay industry and modifying and improving outreach activities.
 - Developing relationships with key advocates
 - Maintain a Relay Service Site on the world Wide Web, offering a range of information about products and services

Seller shall provide, at Sellers expense, Transcription and Interpreter Services at the quarterly Advisory Committee meetings.

Outreach plans shall be outlined, included as Attachment 19, and submitted with the RFP.

5.0 Provision of Facilities

5.1 The following items shall be provided by the Seller:

- a. Relay center building, real estate, furniture, office equipment, telecommunications and other facilities and equipment necessary to provide TRS.
- b. All telecommunications trunks, cable or lines required to be connected to the relay center in order to receive or to initiate telecommunications for purposes of providing TRS.
- c. All personnel and the training of such personnel in order to staff and operate the relay system.
- d. Records of the TRS operation as to permit review and evaluation of TRS results.
- e. Billing records for each relay-assisted call, including the telephone number or credit card number to be billed, terminating telephone number, date, start time of call and ending time of call.

5.2 The TRS Service Provider shall possess and demonstrate the capability to adapt the system to improvements in communications equipment technology and to implement leading edge technology for revision of the TRS.

5.3 The service provider shall meet equipment and staffing requirements necessary to meet the service standards and handle the type of calls and projected call volumes.

5.4 The service provider shall maintain flexibility in order to adjust to the unique needs of the relay center. The system design should illustrate the following:

- a. Most effective network configuration.
- b. Most effective work group size based on call volumes, calling patterns and labor and supervision costs.
- c. Most cost effective equipment configuration.
- d. Adequate facilities and training for the prompt and proper handling of emergency- type calls, such as 911, police, fire, crisis intervention, etc.

5.5 The Seller shall have redundancy features functionally equivalent to the equipment in normal central offices, including uninterruptible power for emergency use.

6.0 Adherence to FCC Standards

All minimum standards and regulations relating to TRS adopted by the FCC and found in Delaware Code 26, Section 220 et. seq. are hereby incorporated by reference as minimum standards required in the context of this Agreement, whether or not said standards are specifically mentioned, named or referred to in this RFP.

7.0 Adherence to PSC Requirements and Standards

All applicable requirements of the Delaware Public Service Commission applying to telecommunications providers are hereby incorporated into this document as requirements of all TRS providers.

8.0 Reporting Requirements

8.1 Invoices

The following information will be reported by the Seller as supporting documentation with the provider's invoice. This information must be reconcilable data taken from a switch report or other similar audible mechanized source. It will be broken into the following categories: Voice, Voice Sequence, TTY (data) and TTY Sequence. The invoice is due by the 21st calendar of the month following the month of service.

- a. Total Monthly Intrastate/IntraLATA Minutes of Service

8.2 Traffic Reports

The following information will be reported by the Seller on a monthly basis. The traffic reports are due monthly; i.e., January's report is due in February, etc. The reports shall be available in electronic media. (Buyer and Seller will mutually agree upon the content and flow of traffic reports.)

- a. Monthly total number of TRS calls and minutes by Relay Center by call type
 - 1. TTY-Baudot (Data)
 - 2. TTY-Baudot (Data) Sequence
 - 3. Voice
 - 4. Voice Sequence
 - 5. Abandoned calls
 - 6. The calls listed on lines 1. through 4. should further be identified as HCO, VCO or Speech to Speech
- b. Monthly total number of TRS calls and minutes by jurisdiction

1. Local
 2. Intrastate/IntraLATA (toll)
 3. Interstate
 4. International
 5. Monthly subtotal (total lines 1. and 2.)
 6. Abandoned calls - calls not completed
 7. Monthly Total Calls (line 5. less line 6.)
- c. Monthly average length of call by the following types:
1. Average length of call based on session minute
 2. Average length of call based on conversation minutes
- d. Average speed of answer (ASA) for all calls into TRS, reported for each location where TRS calls are answered
1. Monthly ASA
 2. Daily ASA shall be available upon request
- e. Total monthly number of calls and minutes handled, by call type, reported for each location where TRS calls are answered
1. Total daily calls
 2. Total monthly calls
 3. Total monthly HCO/VCO, Speech to Speech calls
 4. Summary sheet, showing total monthly calls and minutes handled at each location by call type
- f. The following service statistics should be reported for each location where TRS calls are answered and available upon request
1. Average daily number of calls in queue, waiting to be answered
 2. Average daily length of time in queue
 3. Average daily blockage rate
 4. Summary sheet showing the above statistics totaled on a monthly basis for all locations

9.0 Complaint Reports

The Seller must submit monthly summary reports indicating major topic areas of complaints and number of complaints received in each area and their status; i.e., open, closed, pending, etc. The Seller shall submit summaries of logs indicating the number of complaints received for the 12-month period ending May 31 to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) by July 1 of each year.

10.0 Evaluation Reports

Buyer reserves the right to establish an evaluation of TRS services or to require reports of service evaluations performed by the provider. Buyer also reserves the right to audit the Seller, at Buyer expense, to assess compliance with any and all contract requirements.

11.0 Records Maintenance

The Seller shall maintain a complete file of all records, documents, communications and other materials which pertain to the operation of the service or the delivery of services under this Agreement.

12.0 Additional Requirements

The Seller shall provide an outline with the quote detailing how each additional requirement shall be accomplished. **If there are any additional costs associated with the features listed below, the bidder must include those costs on Appendix C, PRICE SCHEDULE, and provide them with your quote. The bidder must clearly identify each cost and reference each item.**

Affix documentation for Additional Requirements as Attachment 20, and submit it with your proposal.

12.1 Bilingual Communications Assistants

Bilingual CAs must be available. Describe what languages shall be provided.

12.2 New Technology

As new technologies become available, they must be incorporated into the service.

12.3 Customer Preference Database

Seller will maintain a database, available on-line and accessible to the CAs, consisting of information supplied at the request of the customer to assist in processing their relay calls faster and more efficiently; i.e., carrier of choice, voice mail access codes, Automated Attendant Systems, etc.

12.4 Automatic Error Correction

The TRS system must be equipped with an automatic error correction function to automatically correct CA's common typographical errors. The Seller shall briefly describe the error correction system that will be deployed and give the size of the dictionary used by the system.

12.5 Automatic Blocking of TTY Tones

On a call being initiated by a standard phone user or HCO user, the relay system automatically close the line when it detects TTY tones. In this way, the standard phone user or HCO user will not hear TTY tones.

12.6 Unexpected Volume Increase and Inclement Weather

In cases of unexpectedly high call volumes are severe inclement weather, the Seller shall have the ability to route calls to other relay centers.

12.7 Handling of Fast Typing Speeds and Interrupt Capability

It is desirable that the Seller have the ability to use turbo-code or turbo-code-like software to take advantage of faster typing speeds and interrupt capability.

12.8 Automatic Input of Terminating Number by Customer

In order to speed up the processing of calls, the customer, either by TTY, ASCII or Voice, have the ability to automatically input the terminating telephone numbers before the call arrives at the CA station.

12.9 TTY Machine

Seller shall make available to Buyer a TTY machine for his/her use for the term of the Agreement.

12.10 Relay Center Visits

Seller shall arrange for Buyer's Coordinator to make an annual visit to the Relay Center primarily responsible for Delaware calls at Buyer's request.

12.11 Quarterly Relay Meetings

Seller shall arrange for quarterly meetings at a mutually agreeable location to inform Buyer of any technology changes, proposed changes, review system operation, outreach updates, etc.

APPENDIX

C

PRICE SCHEDULE

1.0 Seller will provide TRS Service, as defined herein, for a cost of \$_____ per

session minute.

2.0 Seller will extend Buyer an additional discount of _____% for each minute

exceeding _____ minutes per month.

3.0 Seller will extend to Buyer a _____% discount for invoices paid within _____ days of receipt of invoice.

Seller should list any additional costs that would be associated with providing TRS Service below. If additional space is required, please use separate pages, and attach them with your quote to this Appendix.